



**SEIUHealthcare®**  
United for Quality Care

March 3, 2022  
District 1199NE  
Before the Labor Committee

Good Morning Senator Kushner, Representative Porter and members of the Labor Committee. SEIU 1199NE is in support of the following bills.

**In Support of HB 5249: AN ACT CONCERNING NONCOMPETE AGREEMENTS** Historically, non-compete clauses were put in place to protect a company's trade-secrets or sensitive information, and they applied to those dealing with such secrets: Highly compensated Managerial and executive employees. Non-compete clauses exist to prevent trade-secrets or other sensitive information from being intentionally or accidentally divulged to competitors, vendors, or the public in general. But in more recent times non-compete clauses have been expanded to apply to all workers, including rank and file employees like home care workers, nursing home workers, and group home workers. These workers normally do not come in contact with trade-secrets or sensitive information. However, they are adversely impacted by such policies because of the impact on wage growth, job mobility, and career development.

27 states have enacted legislation to limit or completely ban the use of non-compete clauses, and we urge you to do the same in Connecticut. Please support HB 5249. Thank you for your time.

**In Support of HB 5248: AN ACT CONCERNING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS ON OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING** Our union represents 26,000 health care workers across the public and private sectors in Connecticut. This includes state workers, nursing home workers, group home workers, and home care workers. A large majority of our members are people of color. Black and brown people in Connecticut, much like people of color in the rest of the United states, are disproportionately targeted and impacted by law enforcement. Given the large intersection of our union membership and the Black and Brown populations on the whole, many of our members have experienced incarceration or closely know someone who has experienced it. One of our home care workers was arrested and incarcerated in

high-school after trying after stepping in the middle of two other students who were fighting, and this sort of experience is hardly rare or unique.

Even aside from false convictions, the harsh reality is that a criminal record follows you for the rest of your life, even if you have repented and served your time. Former inmates face over 600 systemic challenges and obstacles when they try to reintegrate into society; they are scrutinized and often denied access to education, employment, or housing. The lack of stable income and housing forces former inmates back into a life of crime, leading to an endless cycle of discrimination, incarceration, and recidivism that cannot be escaped.

Please support HB 5248. It would be a significant step towards fixing this unfair and racist system. Thank you for your time.

### **In Support of HB 5246: AN ACT EXTENDING RECALL RIGHTS OF CERTAIN LAID-OFF EMPLOYEES**

HB 5246 would require employers to notify laid-off employees first when a new position opens up. Employers often choose to go with contractors or staffing agency workers rather than hiring full time employees, spending the bare minimum they can on wages and and nothing at all on benefits. However, laid-off employees deserve the right to be notified and given the first choice.

Our union represents 26,000 health care workers across the public and private sectors in Connecticut. This includes state workers, nursing home workers, group home workers, and home care workers. In this field, rehiring former employees is especially important because not only are the employees impacted. So are the patients. Rehiring former employees helps toward continuity and quality of care.

Please support HB 5246 and ensure that laid off employees are notified and given first choice when a new position opens up. Thank you for your time.

### **In Support of SB 209: AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATUS OF PROBATE COURT SYSTEM EMPLOYEES**

Over the centuries laborers in the United States as well as the rest of the world have had to fight for their rights, including humane treatment, safe working

conditions, and fair wages. But all of it begins with the right to unionize and engage in collective bargaining.

In this day and age, it is reprehensible that there are workers in Connecticut who still do not have the right to form a union and exercise their collective bargaining rights. Unfortunately, that is the case for the people who work in Connecticut's probate courts. SB 209 would give probate court workers the right to form a union, if they so choose. Denying working people their fundamental rights is shameful, and the State of Connecticut should amend this grave oversight by taking a much needed step forward and giving collective bargaining rights to these workers. We urge you to support Senate Bill 209.